



(U) Intelink, Then and Now

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(U//FOUO) Did you ever wonder how Intelink got its start, or where it's headed?

(U) One of the "lessons learned" from the first Gulf War was that more needed to be done to promote cross-agency and national and tactical sharing of intelligence information. In response, the Defense Department and the Intelligence Community jointly commissioned an Architecture Framework Panel in late 1993 to try to find a solution. After studying the matter for about four months, the Panel had written a lengthy document that enumerated many high-level requirements for improving connectivity. But rather than expecting people to read the document, the Panel searched for ways to **show** senior DOD and IC officials what was really needed.

(U) World Wide Web technology was new and answered about 60% of the requirements. It was also free, a major selling point at that point in the fiscal year. So about 10 organizations agreed to host web servers on JWICS -- the Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System -- a Top Secret SI/TK NOFORN network and called the service "Intelink." They hosted examples of multimedia reports, music, video footage, and text reports that would show the broad range of capability that was needed to address many of the problems exhibited during DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. By August 1994, the DCI and Deputy Secretary of Defense declared that Intelink was the strategic direction for intelligence dissemination.

(U//FOUO) NSA was one of the original agencies to participate in Intelink. At the time of the initial prototype, NSA's sole contribution to Intelink was the SIGINT Digest, a predecessor to today's Global SIGINT Highlights, and which included maps, graphics, and images. It proved that anyone could, indeed, share multimedia-based reports and that customers could see them in all their intended glory.

(U//FOUO) Intelink was declared operational on 1 December 1994. In January 1995, NSA began offering 45-days' worth of openly sharable SIGINT product online-searchable through serial, TAG line, and keyword in title. That offering was enhanced through the addition of topics of high interest that allowed customers to click on a topic to see a list of SIGINT that responded to those topics.

(U//FOUO) Over the years, NSA has gradually expanded its Intelink offerings to encompass a year's worth of searchable SIGINT product online, all fully-sharable multimedia products, information about services NSA offers, a whole line of Information Assurance products and services, information to support war fighters, information on NSA, and so forth. In 2001, portal technology was incorporated into NSA's Intelink service, allowing customers to subscribe to information as it is published.

(U//FOUO) Soon after Intelink was declared operational, it became apparent that a TS SI/TK NOFORN Intelink did not solve the national/tactical intelligence-sharing problem, because the bulk of the tactical users were cleared only for SECRET. Since SECRET-cleared personnel were unable to access JWICS and Intelink, another version of Intelink was created on the SECRET Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNET) that is referred to as Intelink-S.

(C//SI) NSA has contributed as much SIGINT to Intelink-S as possible, but classification restrictions and sanitization rules have restricted what could be placed on the NSA Intelink-S site. With the advent of the Global War on Terrorism, however, NSA made a concerted effort to increase the amount of actionable SIGINT available to tactical customers by extracting the tearline portions of terrorism-related products, removing all association with NSA and placing

them on the Defense Intelligence Agency's Intelink-S server. This effort was expanded to include Iraqi-related information, as well. In cooperation with the Army's Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM), in Spring 2004 NSA began pushing Iraqi-related tearlines directly to tactical units in Iraq, with the tearline reports attributed to DOD Special Unit Number One (DODSPECONE).

(U//FOUO) The hallmark of NSA's success in Intelink has been its customer focus. NSA's Intelink sites are all organized based on how a customer would look for the information rather than based on what organization within NSA produced the information. From the first day of participation, NSA has provided feedback links seeking customer input on new services offered and on the content provided. Feedback on SIGINT reporting is automatically loaded into PLUS, SID's product metrics database.

(U//FOUO) The future for NSA's Intelink services remains bright. As transformation programs deliver new capabilities, NSA's Intelink services will provide increasingly sophisticated search and retrieval tools to facilitate customer access. Efforts to transform the underlying technology upon which the Intelink services run today will continue. This will result in subscribers being able to harness the vast power of information NSA offers in conjunction with that of other organizations throughout DoD and the IC.

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